

FRC SCANNING SERVICES

Things to consider
when planning your
scanning project



FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS
of the National Archives and Records Administration

Why should I scan my records?

This question is probably the best place to start when considering scanning a collection of records. Knowing your reasons for scanning will help you make the best decisions when planning your project.



Share and track records easily

Scanning your records can help you share the information in those records instantly with a variety of users, such as staff and customers in multiple locations. Scanned records can eliminate the need for costly reproduction and mailing. They are also easier to track electronically. The FRC can convert your records to a standard format and can help you build and index a centralized repository to help you track records, control loss, and provide information security while records are in transit.



Prepare for disasters

Scanned records can be an integral part of your agency's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and disaster recovery plan. Scanned documents provide backup copies of your paper vital records in an easily portable digital format. This provides extra assurance that you will be able to access the information in the records should disaster strike. The FRC can also provide storage in our Electronic Records Vaults (ERVs) for digital records stored on electronic media.



Respond to audits and discoveries

Federal agency records can contain key evidence; therefore, they are subject to audits, discovery demands, and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) enquiries. These requests are often high-profile and extremely time sensitive. A scanning strategy should be a key part of your agency's risk assessment plan. Digital records are easy to store and search. They can help your agency quickly comply with these kinds of requests and avoid censure, fines, and negative publicity.

www.archives.gov/frc



Salvage damaged records

Paper records are vulnerable to a number of threats. The FRC has helped agencies salvage records that have been damaged and preserve digital images of these records. If disaster strikes, contact the FRC right away. We can assess damaged records on-site, recommend treatments to remediate damage, scan damaged records to provide digital images of them, and help you ensure that you are compliant with Federal records management regulations.



Protect aging paper originals

If your collection includes fragile paper records, scanning can offer significant benefits. Digitizing fragile records preserves the integrity of the originals by allowing them to be handled less. And often, the scanning process increases legibility of aging or hard-to-read records. The National Archives has years of experience handling and preserving fragile records and can advise you on best practices for digitizing these materials.



Save money and free up office space

Storing paper records in the prime real estate of your agency's office is extremely costly. If you have paper records that are currently taking up space in your office, digitizing these records can save you both storage space and money. If your paper records are stored at the FRC, scanning them can save you money on reference requests, since you can instantly access the information in the digitized records rather than placing repeated requests for the paper records.



Become more open and transparent

Scanning key collections of your records can be an important first step in creating and institutionalizing a culture of open government at your agency. The Open Government Directive stipulates that agencies must take specific actions to keep the public informed about what the Federal government is doing. Digitizing your records can help your agency comply with this directive. Scanned records are easy to publish online. They can be retrieved, downloaded, indexed, and searched by commonly used web applications. And they can be easily shared via e-mail and through common social media applications.

Questions? Call 314-801-9300 or e-mail frc@nara.gov